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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: IN COUNTRY REFUGEE PROCESSING - RESPONSE

REF: A. STATE 4350
[B](#). BAGHDAD 0095

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

[1](#). (U) Summary: Embassy Baghdad appreciates Department,s interest in the details of the in-country refugee processing and support for expanding capacity to implement the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act. Responses to REF A questions are contained below. We urge Department to work with us to ensure that we have the resources needed to maximize capacity to address the large and growing caseload of US affiliated Iraqis seeking resettlement, as requested REF B. End Summary.

APPLICANT MURDER

[2](#). (U) The applicant mentioned (REF B, para 6) who was killed was previously brought to the attention of PRM. Following his murder, his widow contacted IOM to report that he had been killed because of his U.S. association and to request resettlement processing for herself and her family. After concluding that facilitation to Jordan for processing in Amman was not the best option, we expedited this case and arranged for immediate pre-screening and DHS interviews. DHS approved the case, but it remains on hold pending clearance of a finger print hit.

SAOs

[3](#). (U) 40 percent of the DHS-adjudicated cases in the IZ caseload are currently on hold due to a pending SAO clearance. As of January 29, 433 of the 1,237 cases adjudicated in Baghdad had undergone both class and fingerprint checks, but were awaiting SAO clearances. If these SAO clearances were obtained, these cases would be ready for out-processing. The other steps which are done in Baghdad, such as medical clearances, are not bottlenecks. This information was obtained from the daily analysis of DHS approved cases which IOM generates every weekday. We would note that other programs, in Jordan, Syria and Egypt, have much lower percentages of cases on hold, which we attribute in part to the timing of our caseload. Baghdad,s first circuit ride was in August/September, when SAO processing times were creeping upwards.

LODGING

[4](#). (U) Embassy management committed to provide beds for 12 IOM caseworkers, effective December 1. Due to the high demand for TDY support and a fixed number of apartments, the Embassy has instituted a TDY housing policy requiring TDY,ers with assignments less than six months (186 days), to share bedrooms, with four to an apartment. As IOM staff has

a continuous presence here, management will provide IOM with three dedicated rooms, allowing the team members to keep certain items in their rooms, reducing the amount of luggage they need to transport in and out of the IZ. Management will house DHS circuit ride staff as it does other TDY visitors. If IOM or DHS opted to assign their employees here for six month assignments, as we encourage, in order to improve the efficiency of our operation and reduce the burden of managing continuous TDYs, they would be housed two to an apartment.

WORK SPACE

15. (U) We currently have 11 trailers at the Ocean Cliffs site dedicated for interviewing and administrative space. During DHS circuit rides, four trailers will be used for adjudication and one for the team lead, while the remaining six trailers will be used for IOM pre-screening. Two IOM pre-screeners will offer DHS support. When the IOM Iraq team coordinator is here, he will either share a trailer with the DHS team lead, or work from the NEC. The mayor of Ocean Cliffs has previously indicated that more trailers may be available upon request.

16. (U) FOB Prosperity is on schedule to become operational by the first or second week of April. This is subject to Qby the first or second week of April. This is subject to change due to construction delays that may arise. Processing will continue at Ocean Cliffs until the move takes place. We are working with the DOD project managers to ensure timely completion of an acceptable structure with 15 interview spaces. Starting in early February, we will have a weekly

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&walk-through8 with the project manager to be able to observe progress of the construction. We will endeavor to minimize the loss of interviewing time during the move to Prosperity as we did for the move from the Palace to Ocean Cliffs, when no interviews were cancelled or missed.

17. (SBU) We have shared the security recommendations made by UNDSS for the Prosperity facility with DS. DS will survey the site, coordinate with UNDSS, and report back.

COST SHARING

18. (U) Embassy Baghdad does not expect to implement ICASS until at least FY 2011. This will be a major budgetary change for all agencies with personnel here. In recent months, DOD officials in Washington have notified DOS bureaus that contractors will be charged for Milair flights, and that they will soon be charged for dining and other facilities, with the transactions being recorded by the SPOT database system. The Embassy has addressed this matter by issuing no-cost travel orders for IOM caseworkers which are valid for at least one-year, exempting IOM from having to pay for Milair flights. Embassy is starting to look at alternatives to Milair, which would require payments for flights.

MEDICALS

19. (U) The capacity of the two clinics providing medical exams for refugees is 800 per month. These 800 slots are dedicated for refugee exams and do not include SIV medicals, which are performed at the IZ-based Qadisiya clinic. The Red Zone (RZ) clinic has the capacity to do 500 individual medical exams monthly, while the International Zone (IZ) clinic has the capacity to do approximately 300 individual medical exams per month. At the current processing rate, if one closed, we would be able to continue medical exams for the full caseload.

FLIGHTS

¶10. (U) There are currently seven airlines that operate from Baghdad International Airport to seven cities in the Middle East. Royal Jordanian and Turkish Airways each operate 4-5 flights weekly. Iraqi Airways operates three to five international flights out of Baghdad a day. Iraqi Airways currently has several purchase and lease deals in process or completed, which could lead to a doubling of the fleet in a matter of weeks or months. In addition to this, seven international flights a day serve Erbil. Iraqi Airways has daily flights from BIAP to Erbil. Most BIAP and Erbil flights have a capacity of 130 to 140 passengers. Current capacity is sufficient to handle the refugee and IDP caseload and capacity is growing. In addition to regularly scheduled flights, there are numerous charter operators with frequent service that could be mobilized if there were ever a shortage of regularly schedule seats. Bottom line is that according to current projections, flight capacity will not constrain departures of refugees and IDPs.

CROCKER